

Message Text

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ACTION INR-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 2240

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR, MR
SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON NEW GOVERNMENT

REF: (A) NOUAKCHOTT 1878 (B) NOUAK 447 (C) NOUAK 1950
(D) USDAO DAKAR 5307 (E) NOUAK 1992 (F) NOUAK 2207
1. COMPLETE BIO SKETCHES OF ALL MEMBERS OF MILITARY COM-
MITTEE OF NATIONAL RECTIFICATION AND CABINET HAVE APPEARED
JULY 12, 13 AND 14 ISSUES OF CHAAB GOVERNMENT RUN DAILY.
COPIES HAVE BEEN POUCHED TO INR AND AF/W. ADDITIONAL INFOR-
MATION ON LEADING PERSONALITIES INCLUDED REFTELS. SEE REFS.
A,B C AND E FOR ADDITIONAL DATA ON PRESIDENT SALEK.

2. SOME MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION FOUND IN EMBASSY BIO
HOLDINGS WHICH NOT ALREADY TRANSMITTED TO DEPARTMENT, TOGE-
THER WITH ODDS AND ENDS ACQUIRED LOCALLY FOLLOWS:
A. LT COL AHMED SALEM, NEW MINISTER OF EQUIPMENT,
ACCORDING TO ONE EMBASSY OFFICER IS QUITE INTELLIGENT AND
SINCERE, IF A BIT BITTER WHEN HE WAS GOVERNOR OF AIOUN
(1975-1976) ABOUT DEMANDS MADE UPON HIM BY GOVERNMENT
WHILE PROVIDING HIM ONLY A LIMITED SALARY.
B. FOREIGN MINISTER CHEIKHNA OULD MOHAMED LAGHDAF
FIRST MAURITANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER IS CHARACTERIZED BY SOME
AROUND HIM AS INFIRM TO THE POINT OF VISIBLY TREMBLING ON
OCCASION. HE SEEMED TO BE REASONABLY FIT WHEN THE AMBAS-
SADOR CALLED ON HIM JULY 29 KNOWLEDGEABLE MAURITANIANS
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SEEM TO REGARD HIM AS A FIGUREHEAD AND PERHAPS TEMPORARY
APPOINTMENT.
C. LT. COL MAOUIYA OULD SID'AHMED TAYA PERMANENT
SECRETARY CHARGED WITH ADMINISTRATION OF THE DEFENSE
DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN CHARACTERIZED AS A STRONG ADMINIS-
TRATOR. A PERHAPS IDEAL CHOICE FOR CARETAKING DUTIES IN
THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE. HE WAS CHIEF OF CHANCELRY OF

DEFENSE MINISTRY IN 1970.

D. DOCTOR DIAGANA YOUSSEF CONSIDERED ONE OF THE MORE COLORFUL MEMBERS OF THE NEW CABINET, DIAGANA DEVELOPED QUITE A RECORD OF OPPOSITION TO THE FORMER REGIME AND IS REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN THE AUTHOR OF SEVERAL ANTI-GOVERNMENT TRACTS DISTRIBUTED RECENTLY. A SARAKOLE AND ONE OF THE NATIONS FEW DOCTORS (MOST OF WHOM HAVE OPPOSED THE REGIME DUE TO ITS PROHIBITION AGAINST PRIVATE MEDICAL PRACTICE), HE IS EXPECTED TO BE AN ACTIVIST AS HEALTH MINISTER.

E. NEW MINISTER OF EDUCATION SECK NAME DIACK HAS A REPUTATION FOR BEING SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH AND HAS BEEN LESS THAT COOPERATIVE WITH REGARD TO SOME OF THE PROPOSED ACTIVITIES OF THE PEACE CORPS IN THE EDUCATION FIELD.

F. CAPTAIN MOHAMED MAHMOUD OULD AHMED DEH. FOR WHOM NO BIRTHPLACE IS GIVEN IN BIODATA SENT POUCH IS REPORTED TO BE FROM AOUN (SECOND) REGION AND PROBABLY FROM THE SAME VILLAGE (TAMCHEKET) AS FOREIGN MINISTER CHEIKHNA OULD LAGHDAF. HE IS REPORTED TO BE A DARING, EVEN RISK TAKING SOLDIER.

G. NEW MINISTER OF PLANNING AND MINES MUHAMMED MOCTAR OULD ZAMEL IS A PRIOR US GRANTEE WHO VISITED U.S. LAST SUMMER ON MULTI-REGIONAL INTERNATIONAL VISITOR PROGRAM ON LEGISLATIVE ISSUES AND PROCESSES. REPORT OF ESCORT OFFICER THAT ZAMEL WAS ALMOST DEADLY SERIOUS IN EVERYTHING
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HE DID AND THE BEST "STUDENT" OF ALL NINE PARTICIPANTS CAN BE ATTESTED TO BY EMBOFFFS WHO FOUND ZAMEL MOST IMPRESSIVE INDIVIDUAL IN PRIOR POST OF DIRECTOR OF STATISTICS, DESPITE FACT THAT STATISTICAL PUBLICATIONS HAVE ALMOST CEASED TO EXIST IN MAURITANIA DUE TO LACK OF PUBLICATIONS BUDGET. ZAMEL HAS TOURED CENSUS DEPARTMENT IN SUITLAND MARYLAND AND

ALSO HAD ENTHUSIASTIC CONVERSATIONS WITH DR. JENSEN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA ON SOLAR ENERGY PROGRAMS.

H. NEW MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS AND ONLY MARABOUT (MUSLIM HOLYMAN) IN CABINET BAH OULD NEH HAS BEEN CHARACTERIZED AS WEAK, RETIRING AND LACKLUSTER (SEE A-106 OF DECEMBER 21, 1964 AND A-57 OF NOVEMBER 20 1963) DESPITE HAVING AT ONE TIME OCCUPIED POSITION (AS PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY) OF SUCCESSOR TO PRESIDENT. SINCE AMBASSADOR SULEIMAN OULD SHEIKH SIDIA HAS NOW EMERGED AS IMPORTANT FIGURE IN NEW REGIME, IT WAS SURPRISING TO SEE BAH OULD NEH (WHO HAD ONCE BEEN JOINED FORCES WITH FORMER PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH TO OUST SULEIMAN FROM HIS SEAT AS PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY) GIVEN A CABINET POST, EVEN IF A RATHER CEREMONIAL ONE.

I. MINISTER OF CULTURE AND INFORMATION BREIDELEIL WAS

EDITOR IN CHIEF OF A NEWSPAPER LE PEUPLE IN 1970.

J. LT. MOULAYE HACHEM OULD MOULAYE AIDE DE CAMP TO
FORMER PRESIDENT AND INDIVIDUAL WHO REPORTEDLY CARRIED OUT
ACTUAL ARREST IS YOUNGEST MEMBER OF CMRN BORN IN 1948.
FYI: BOTH CABINET AND CMRN ARE RATHER YOUNG WITH
AVERAGE AGE OF 38.5. ONLY FOREIGN MINISTER LAGHDAF AND
MINISTER FOR JUSTICE AND ISLAMIC AFFAIRS NEH ARE OVER 50.
END FYI.

K. MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND FISHING LT COL. AHMED
OULD BOUCEIFF IS A VERITABLE NOBLE MAN, THOUGHT TO BE A
DESCENDANT OF BENI HASSAN'S WARRIOR TRIBE. HE IS AN
INTELLIGENT AND CALM INDIVIDUAL WITH A GREAT DEAL OF
COMMAND PRESENCE. WHEN HE ARRIVED AT DINNER GIVEN FOR
AMBASSADOR AT NEMA, WHERE HE WAS COMMANDER OF 1ST MILITARY
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REGION HE WAS TREATED EXTREMELY DIFFERENTIALLY BY ALL
MAURITANIANS PRESENT INCLUDING GOVERNOR. SOME SAY, HOWEVER, THAT HE
IS MORE CONCERNED WITH FORM THAN SUBSTANCE.

L. LT COL SOUMARE SILMANE IS GRADUATE OF SAUMUR MILITARY SCHOOL
IN FRANCE, BRIGHT AND INQUISITIVE. HE SPEAKS SOME ENGLISH
AND TOLD EMBOFF DURING LUNCH AT TIDJIKJA THAT HE ENJOYED BOOKS
ON MILITARY SCIENCE AS WELL AS FICTION. HE HAS AN ENGAGING
SENSE OF HUMOR, AND COMES FROM WOMPOU NEAR SELIBABY IN SOUTH-
ERN TIP OF MAURITANIA.

M. CAPTAIN AMATH ATHIE IS A NATIVE OF SINTHIOU NEAR
KAEDI.

N. COMMANDANT THIAM EL HADJ IS A WELL RESPECTED MILI-
TARY VETERAN OF INDIOCHINA WAR, FORMER ATHLETE WITH ACTIVE
INTEREST IN SOCCER. KRYZA

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